



# Portraits of Patriotism

**“Kajon-Ni, Korea, December 1952”**

At the dawn of the 20th century, America continued its long tradition of maintaining a small standing Army buttressed by state-controlled militias. The Army had no formal capability to augment its regular force with a large pool of reserves reliant on the national government for their funding, inspections and training standards. In 1908, all that changed with legislation creating a modest Reserve medical corps of 116 Army contract physicians. Since then, the Army Reserve has grown to more than 3,000 units and 250,000 Individual Ready Reservists, and its soldiers have served through two world wars, several police actions, and various low-intensity conflicts and peace enforcement and humanitarian missions.

During the Korean War, 240,500 Reserve soldiers were called to active duty. As depicted in Don Spaulding's painting of Battery C, 780th Field Artillery Battalion, Reserve battalions often served as homogeneous units attached to active-duty forces. Many individual Reservists served alongside active-duty and National Guard soldiers, providing specialized skills and support. Since then, the Reserve has provided combat support and combat service support to operations in such places as Vietnam, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo. Specialties they provide include military police, civil affairs, aviation, engineering, chemical, postal, medical, finance, psychological operations and more.

MG Leonard Wood could have been describing today's Reserve when he observed in 1916 that, “Behind the regular Army must always stand the great reserve Army ... so trained as to be promptly available for military service if needed, but following their normal occupations in time of peace.” — *CPT Patrick Swan*

